

Drawing Amendments

The attached sheets of drawings include formal Figs. 1-4.

These sheets, which include Figs. 1-4, replace the original sheet including Figs. 1-4. The shading has been removed from Figs. 1-4.

Please approve the drawing changes that are marked in red on the accompanying "Annotated Sheet Showing Changes" of Figs. 1-4. Formal "Replacement Sheets" of amended Figs. 1-4 is also enclosed.

Attachments: Replacement Sheets  
Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

Remarks/Arguments:

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 1-13 remain in the application. Claim 1 has been amended.

In item 1 on page 2 of the above-identified Office action, the Examiner has requested information known regarding a SUSI remote controlled vehicle from Framatome ANP GmbH. Enclosed herewith is an IDS and information on the SUSI vehicle.

In item 2 on page 2 of the Office action, the specification has been objected to because of the following informalities.

The Examiner stated that on page 8, line 6, "in the figure" should be replaced with "in figure 1". The specification has been amended as suggested by the Examiner, so as facilitate prosecution of the application. Therefore, the objection to the specification by the Examiner is believed to have been overcome.

The Examiner stated that on page 9, line 5, "figure" should be replaced with "figures". The specification has been amended as suggested by the Examiner, so as facilitate prosecution of

the application. Therefore, the objection to the specification by the Examiner is believed to have been overcome.

In item 3 on page 3 of the above-identified Office action, the drawings have been objected to because the use of shading makes the individual features of applicant's invention unclear. Enclosed herewith are new drawings with the shading omitted.

In item 3 on page 3 of the Office action, the Examiner has requested a revised Fig. 4 that better shows the apparatus, the reactor walls, the screws, and also includes text labels for the key components. Figs. 1 and 4 are believed to clearly show the apparatus, the reactor walls, and the screws. Therefore, Fig. 4 has not been amended as requested by the Examiner.

Should the Examiner find any further objectionable items, counsel would appreciate a telephone call during which the matter may be resolved.

In item 5 on page 4 of the Office action, claims 1-3 and 9 have been rejected as being fully anticipated by Masuo (JP 2000-338291) under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

The rejection has been noted and the claims have been amended in an effort to even more clearly define the invention of the instant application. The claims are patentable for the reasons set forth below. Support for the changes is found on page 8, line 19 to page 9, line 8 of the specification.

Before discussing the prior art in detail, it is believed that a brief review of the invention as claimed, would be helpful.

Claim 1 calls for, *inter alia*:

a free floating remote-controlled underwater diving vehicle having drives disposed thereon for approaching different inspection positions.

The Masuo reference discloses a device for checking bolts in the upper core grid plate of a reactor pressure vessel. The device has an ultrasonic probe (28) that is disposed at the free end of an extendable arm (25), which can be rotated via a shaft (20) that is rotatably mounted in a main body (9). The main body (9) is vertically lowered into the flooded reactor pressure vessel with a cable winch (7) until it rests on the upper core grid plate. The winch is disposed at the fuel element loading device.

The reference does not show a free floating remote-controlled underwater diving vehicle having drives disposed thereon for approaching different inspection positions, as recited in claim 1 of the instant application. The Masuo reference discloses a device for checking bolts in the upper core grid plate of a reactor pressure vessel. The device has a main body that is lowered into the pressure vessel with a winch. Masuo does not disclose that the device is a free floating remote-controlled underwater diving vehicle having drives disposed thereon for approaching different inspection positions. This is contrary to the invention of the instant application as claimed, in which a free floating remote-controlled underwater diving vehicle has drives disposed thereon for approaching different inspection positions.

Since claim 1 is believed to be allowable over Masuo, dependent claims 2-3 and 9 are believed to be allowable over Masuo as well.

Even though claim 1 is believed to be allowable, the following remarks pertain to the non-obviousness of claim 1.

Masuo discloses a test device, which specifically and exclusively is suited for testing the vertically positioned

bolts at the upper core grid plate. Therefore, a person of ordinary skill in the art is not given any motivation to transfer individual constructive features of this device to a freely floating underwater vehicle because the latter already ensures a higher flexibility regarding the approachability of inspection positions. Therefore, a person of ordinary skill in the art confronted with the task of testing horizontally mounted screws in a core enclosure with a freely floating underwater vehicle, would not consider Masuo. This is because in Masuo, the task is based on a manipulation concept, which is fundamentally different from the approach taken in the instant application.

In item 6 on page 5 of the Office action, claims 1 and 5-8 have been rejected as being fully anticipated by Burns et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,196,049) (hereinafter "Burns") under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

The Burns reference discloses that a drive housing (160) is located at the free end of a manipulator arm (26). The manipulator arm is axially displaceable on a central main column (24). The main column (24) is lowered with a crane and is supported by the reactor pressure vessel.

The reference does not show a free floating remote-controlled underwater diving vehicle having drives disposed thereon for approaching different inspection positions, as recited in claim 1 of the instant application. The Burns reference discloses a manipulator arm that is disposed on a main column which is lowered by the crane and is supported by the pressure reactor vessel. Burns does not disclose that the device is a free floating remote-controlled underwater diving vehicle having drives disposed thereon for approaching different inspection positions. This is contrary to the invention of the instant application as claimed, in which a free floating remote-controlled underwater diving vehicle has drives disposed thereon for approaching different inspection positions.

Since claim 1 is believed to be allowable over Burns, dependent claims 5-8 are believed to be allowable over Burns as well.

In item 8 on page 6 of the Office action, claim 4 has been rejected as being obvious over by Masuo (JP 2000-338291) in view of Wagner et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,959,211) (hereinafter "Wagner") under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Wagner does not make up for the deficiencies of Masuo. Since claim 1 is believed to be

allowable, dependent claim 4 is believed to be allowable as well.

In item 9 on page 6 of the Office action, claims 10 and 13 have been rejected as being obvious over by Masuo (JP 2000-338291) in view of Wagner (U.S. Patent No. 5,959,211) under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Wagner does not make up for the deficiencies of Masuo. Since claim 1 is believed to be allowable, dependent claims 10 and 13 are believed to be allowable as well.

In item 10 on page 7 of the Office action, claim 12 has been rejected as being obvious over by Masuo (JP 2000-338291) under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Since claim 1 is believed to be allowable, dependent claim 12 is believed to be allowable as well.

It is appreciatively noted from item 11 on page 8 of the Office action that claim 11 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The claims have not been amended as indicated by the Examiner, as the claims are believed to be patentable in their existing form.

It is accordingly believed to be clear that none of the references, whether taken alone or in any combination, either show or suggest the features of claim 1. Claim 1 is,



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therefore, believed to be patentable over the art and since all of the dependent claims are ultimately dependent on claim 1, they are believed to be patentable as well.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-13 are solicited.

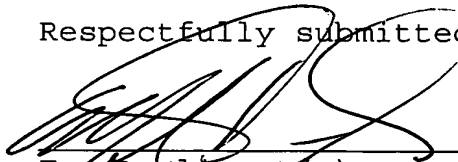
In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel respectfully requests a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out.

If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

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Please charge any other fees which might be due with respect  
to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner &  
Greenberg P.A., No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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For Applicant(s)

**Alfred K. Dassler**  
**52,794**

AKD:cgm

December 12, 2005

Lerner and Greenberg, P.A.  
Post Office Box 2480  
Hollywood, FL 33022-2480  
Tel: (954) 925-1100  
Fax: (954) 925-1101

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FIG. 1

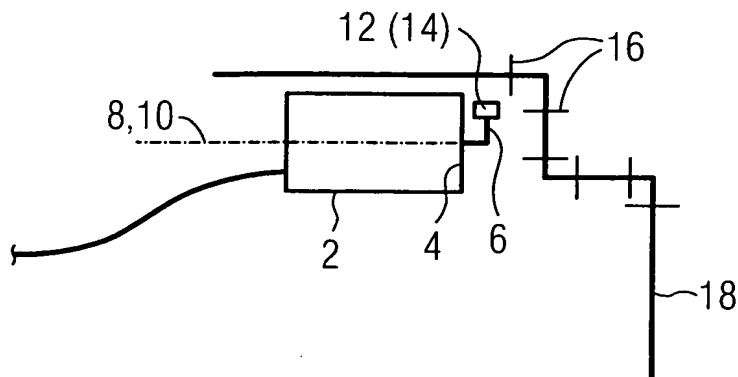


FIG. 2

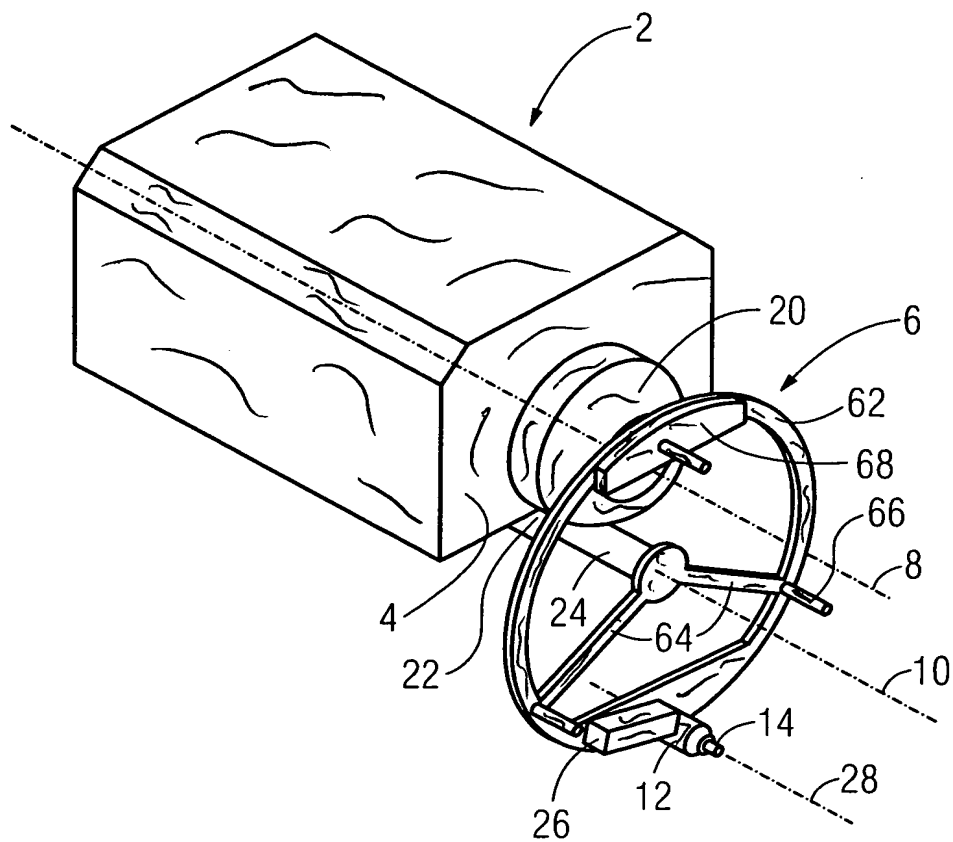


FIG. 3

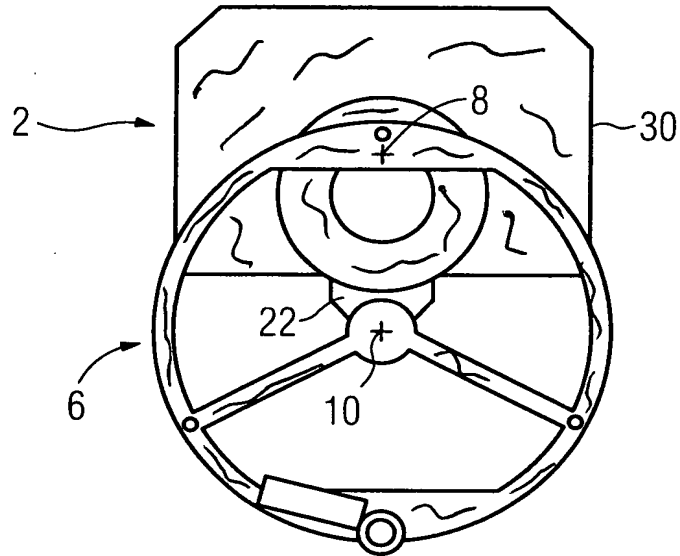


FIG. 4

